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**Testimony of Jesse Cole Cutler**  
**New York City Council Committee on Education Oversight Hearing**  
**October 16, 2018**

My name is Jesse Cole Cutler, and I am a partner at the Law Offices of Regina Skyer & Associates, LLP, a special education law firm representing thousands of New York City families. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

My firm supports the passage of Introduction 1099, which would provide parents, schools, and other authorized individuals access to real-time GPS location data for school buses.

We are behind the times. Dozens of school districts across the country (like the city of Houston, during Chancellor Carranza's tenure), have successfully developed GPS bus location apps for parents, or have contracted with existing third-party developers to provide this service.

Right now, some of our clients buy an extra phone and use it as a makeshift GPS tracker. But this is an inequitable solution to a problem that also impacts families with

more limited means, and it doesn't help a parent know where the bus is before the child boards it.

Instead, too many parents decide not to put their child on the bus at all, coming to the conclusion that it isn't safe, reliable, or good for the child's educational progress. These parents incur significant transportation costs and limit their workdays.

It is troubling that we have normalized the idea that disabled children as young as three should endure long waits for no-show buses, trips to school in excess of 2-3 hours in each direction, chronic late arrivals to school, non-adherence to their medical codes, and a callous disregard for the kinds of basic comforts any adult here would expect for themselves, like air conditioning on a hot summer day—when 12-month special education programs are still in session.

Providing parents and schools access to real-time GPS location data won't solve all our problems. But OPT *must* learn to welcome greater transparency. This is a simple, tangible way to ease the stress of families with special needs children, and I urge you to adopt this legislation.

Thank you.